

REMARKS

The Office examined claims 1-34 and rejected same. With this paper, various of the claims are amended, two (claims 6 and 23) are canceled, and new claims 35-38 are added, so that claims 1-5, 7-22, and 24-38 are now pending.

The claims with change-tracking are provided with this paper as required by the rules, and in addition, for ease of reference, a copy of the changed claims without change-tracking is attached to this paper.

Regarding some of the changes to the previously presented claims

Various of the previously presented claims are changed in ways believed related only to matters of form. In particular, "characterized by/in that" is replaced with "comprising/wherein." Applicant respectfully submits that such changes are permissible per MPEP §2111.03 (the transitional term "comprising" is synonymous with "characterized by"). Also, reference numerals/labels are removed from the claims, which change does not affect the scope of the claims per MPEP §608.01(m) (the use of reference characters is considered as having no effect on the scope of the claims). Finally, the claims are amended to remove "step of" language.

Regarding a limitation added to claims 1 and 18

Claim 1 is changed with this paper to include the limitations of claim 6, and claim 18, a method claim corresponding to apparatus claim 1 and the only other independent claim examined, is changed to incorporate the limitation of claim 23 (which corresponds to claim 6). As argued below, the assertions of the Office notwithstanding, the invention as in claim 6 or as in claim 18 is not disclosed by the applied references.

Rejections under 35 USC §102

At paragraph 5 of the Office action, claims 1-9, 17-26 and 34 are rejected under 35 USC §102 as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,999,721 (Ollis et al.).

As noted, with this paper claim 1 is changed to incorporate the limitations of claim 6, and so now recites an annunciator, and a buddy detector application, responsive to information received by the short-range transceiver and including an identifier indicating another communication device, for providing to the annunciator a control signal actuating the annunciator if and only if the identifier is included in a buddy list data store. Method claim 18 recites corresponding limitations.

The Office asserts that Ollis discloses same, referring to Figures 4-6, and to col. 7 at lines 4-8 and 17. Applicant respectfully points out that at the cited location, Ollis discloses merely

Applicant respectfully submits that as explained in Ollis at col. 6, line 60 to col. 8, line 17, Figures 4-6 of Ollis disclose only a list of found devices (which are therefore temporarily near enough for communication of messages via one of the wireless transfer mechanisms, other than cellular, disclosed in Ollis, such as Bluetooth), and various stages in the communication of a message (conveying an "object") to several of the found devices. No use of a buddy list is used to activate an annunciator if a device associated with a buddy on the buddy list is found. The list of devices shown in Figure 4 is not a buddy list: it is a list of the found devices, and there is no indication in Ollis that other than all found devices appear on the list.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the rejections under 35 USC §102 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 USC §103

At section 4 of the Office action, claims 11-16 and 28-33 are rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Ollis.

Claims 11-13 further recite a controller adapted to receive from another device a request for permission to control a stimulus generator, to present the request to a user via the user equipment user interface, to signal the user response to the request, to receive command signals from the other device indicating commands to cause one or another of various available stimuli sensations, and to provide stimulus control signals corresponding to the received command signals. The Office does not show or assert that the prior art teaches or suggests a controller receiving command signals from another device, let alone a controller giving permission to the other device (with the approval of a user) to send such commands.

The same argument applies to claims 28-30.

Claims 14 and 31, which depend from claims 1 and 18, are believed allowable at least by virtue of their dependencies.

Claims 15-16, to a communication terminal including an apparatus as in claim 1, further recite a phone list data store for holding a list of phone numbers organized as records indexed based on a nickname identifier wherein the phone numbers are kept secret from a user, and for providing a phone number from the phone list data store in a guarded signal so as not to reveal the phone number to a user, wherein the apparatus is configured to respond to the guarded signal by causing the phone number to be dialed by the user equipment device without revealing the phone number to the user equipment user interface and so keeping the phone number secret from a user of the user equipment device.

(See page 17, the paragraph beginning at line 1, for a description of this aspect of the invention.) In rejecting

claims 15-16, the Office asserts only that the prior art teaches retrieving and otherwise generally referring to phone numbers via nickname identifier. But there is no assertion or showing in the Office action that the elements of the invention as in claims 15-16 are prior art, and applicant respectfully points out that Ollis does not teach a data store and access to same in which phone numbers are kept secret from a user.

The same argument applies to claims 32-33.

At section 5 of the Office action, claims 10 and 27 are rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Ollis in view of US 2001/00229166 (Rune et al.).

Claim 10 further recites: a store and forward service application, for receiving communications via the short-range transceiver, for determining whether the communications have as an intended recipient a device peer to the apparatus but other than the apparatus, and for retransmitting any such communications via the short-range transceiver and including in the retransmission an identifier indicating a user of the apparatus, thereby providing to peer devices an increased-range short-range communication facility and allowing the user to take credit for providing the facility. Rune does not teach including an identifier of a user of the apparatus providing a retransmission.

The same argument applies to claim 27.

For the reasons given, applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of claims under 35 USC §103 be withdrawn.

New claims

New claims 35-37 recite limitations corresponding to those recited in claims 1 and 3-4 (as amended), respectively.

Like amended claims 1 and 18, new claim 38 recites a buddy

detector application, responsive to information including an identifier indicating another communication device, for providing to an annunciator a control signal actuating the annunciator if and only if the identifier is included in a buddy list data store. Support is claim 1 and claim 6 as filed.

Thus, new independent claims 35 and 38 are believed allowable over the applied art for the same reasons as for claim 1, and new claims 36-37, depending from new claim 35, are believed allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Conclusion

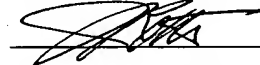
For all the foregoing reasons it is believed that all of the claims of the application are in condition for allowance and their passage to issue is earnestly solicited.

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Date

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Attachment. The claims as changed by this paper, but without change tracking:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus, comprising:

a cellular interface, providing at least part of a wireless or plug connection to a user equipment device configured for cellular communication; and

a short-range transceiver, coupled to the cellular interface, for wirelessly communicating with short-range transceivers of other communication devices, for receiving from another communication device information including an identifier indicating the other communication device;

an annunciator, for alerting a user to the occurrence of an event;

a buddy list data store, for holding a list of identifiers, with the list organized as records so as to be able to retrieve a record based on the identifier; and

a buddy detector application, responsive to the information including the identifier indicating the other communication device, for providing to the annunciator a control signal actuating the annunciator if and only if the identifier is included in the buddy list data store.

2. (Currently amended) A communication terminal comprising a user equipment device configured for cellular communication and an apparatus as in claim 1, wherein the user equipment device includes an auxiliary user interface providing a user interface to the apparatus, and the user equipment user interface is operative in combination with the auxiliary user interface.

3. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the short-range transceiver is operative according to the BlueTooth

protocol or other short-range radio-wave based protocol.

4. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the cellular interface is via the Bluetooth protocol or other radiofrequency-based coupling protocol, or uses an infrared-based coupling technology.

5. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the short-range transceiver of the apparatus is operative according to a predetermined protocol and has a range at least several multiples of the range usual for a short-range transceiver operative according to the predetermined protocol.

6. Canceled.

7. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the identifier is an identifier of a short-range transceiver associated with the predetermined buddy.

8. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the buddy identifier is a nickname of the predetermined buddy.

9. (Currently amended) A communication terminal comprising a user equipment device configured for cellular communication and the apparatus of claim 1, wherein the buddy detector application provides to the user equipment device information indicating the predetermined buddy for display to a user via a user interface of the user equipment device.

10. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:

a store and forward service application, for receiving communications via the short-range transceiver, for determining whether the communications have as an intended recipient a device

that is peer to the apparatus but is other than the apparatus, and for retransmitting any such communications via the short-range transceiver and including in the retransmission an identifier indicating a user of the apparatus, thereby providing to peer devices an increased-range short-range communication facility and allowing the user to take credit for providing the facility.

11. (Currently amended) A communication terminal comprising a user equipment device configured for cellular communication and the apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:

a controller adapted to receive from another device a request for permission to control a stimulus generator, to present the request to a user via a user interface of the user equipment device, to signal the user response to the request, to receive command signals from the other device indicating commands to cause one or another of various available stimuli sensations, and to provide stimulus control signals corresponding to the received command signals; and

the stimulus generator, responsive to the stimulus control signals, for generating stimulus sensations corresponding to the stimulus control signals.

12. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the stimulus generator emits light of a color indicated by the stimulus control signal.

13. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the stimulus generator emits sound indicated by the stimulus control signal.

14. (Currently amended) A communication terminal comprising a user equipment device configured for cellular communication and

the apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:

a personal web page administrator, responsive to signals from the short-range transceiver indicating the nearby presence of another short-range transceiver, for exchanging signals with a user of the user equipment device to determine whether to send a personal web page to the other short-range transceiver and for sending a web page to the other short-range transceiver; and

a web page data store holding the personal web page.

15. (Currently amended) A communication terminal comprising a user equipment device configured for cellular communication and the apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:

a phone list data store for holding a list of phone numbers organized as records indexed based on a nickname identifier wherein the phone numbers are kept secret from a user, and for providing a phone number from the phone list data store in a guarded signal so as not to reveal the phone number to a user;

and wherein the apparatus is configured to respond to the guarded signal by causing the phone number to be dialed by the user equipment device without revealing the phone number to the user equipment user interface and so keep the phone number secret from a user of the user equipment device.

16. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the apparatus is configured so that the phone number is called only for sending a message according to the short message service or another kind of text and/or graphics message, but not for enabling voice communication.

17. (Currently amended) A system, comprising a telecommunications network including a radio access network, and a user equipment device, wherein the user equipment device is

provided in combination with an apparatus as in claim 1.

18. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:

receiving from another communication device, via a short-range transceiver in a communication device, information indicating an identifier of the other communication device; and

determining whether the identifier of the other communication device indicates a buddy in a buddy list data store and if so, providing to an annunciator a control signal actuating the annunciator to indicate to a user receiving the information indicating the identifier of the other communication device.

19. Canceled.

20. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein the short-range transceiver is operative according to the Bluetooth protocol or a comparable short-range radio-wave based protocol.

21. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein the interface with the user equipment device is via the Bluetooth protocol or other radiofrequency-based coupling protocol, or uses an infrared-based coupling technology.

22. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein the short-range transceiver of the apparatus is operative according to a predetermined protocol and has a range at least several multiples of the range usual for a short-range transceiver operative according to the predetermined protocol.

23. Canceled.

24. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein the identifier is an identifier of a short-range transceiver included

as part of the peer device.

25. (Currently amended) The method claim 18, wherein the identifier is a nickname of a user associated with the other communication device.

26. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising providing to a user equipment device the identifier, for display to a user via a user interface of the user equipment device.

27. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising providing a store and forward service of:

receiving communications via the short-range transceiver and determining whether the communications have as an intended recipient a device that is peer to the auxiliary device but is other than the auxiliary device; and

retransmitting any such communications via the short-range transceiver and including in the retransmission an identifier indicating a user of the auxiliary device, thereby providing to peer devices an increased-range short-range communication facility and allowing the user to take credit for providing the facility.

28. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising:

receiving from a peer device, via the short-range transceiver, stimulus control signals indicating commands to cause one or another of various available stimuli sensations; and

providing the received stimulus control signals to a stimulus generator for generating stimuli sensations corresponding to the stimulus control signals.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the stimulus generator emits light of a color indicated by the stimulus control signal.

30. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the stimulus generator emits sound indicated by the stimulus control signal.

31. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising:

receiving signals via the short-range transceiver indicating the nearby presence of another short-range transceiver; and

using the short-range transceiver to send a personal web page to the other short-range transceiver.

32. (Currently amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising:

adding a phone number to a phone list data store holding a list of phones organized as records indexed based on a nickname identifier, wherein the phone numbers are kept secret from a user;

retrieving the phone number, along with an associated nickname, and providing both in a guarded signal so as not to reveal the phone number to a user; and

using the guarded signal to place a call to the phone number using a user equipment device configured for cellular communication, while displaying to a user the nickname but not the number being called and keeping secret from the user the phone number being called.

33. (Currently amended) The method of claim 32, wherein the phone number is called using the short message service or another kind of text and/or graphics message service, but not a voice

communication service.

34. (Currently amended) A computer program product comprising: a computer readable storage structure embodying computer program code thereon for execution by a computer processor in equipment comprising a user equipment device coupled to an auxiliary device, wherein said computer program code includes instructions for performing the method of claim 18.

35. (New) An apparatus, comprising:

cellular interface means for providing at least part of a wireless or plug connection to a user equipment device configured for cellular communication; and

short-range transceiver means, coupled to the cellular interface, for wirelessly communicating with short-range transceivers of other communication devices, for receiving from another communication device information including an identifier indicating the other communication device;

annunciator means, for alerting a user to the occurrence of an event;

a buddy list data store means, for holding a list of identifiers, with the list organized as records so as to be able to retrieve a record based on the identifier; and

buddy detector means, responsive to the information including the identifier indicating the other communication device, for providing to the annunciator a control signal actuating the annunciator if and only if the identifier is included in the buddy list data store means.

36. (New) The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the short-range transceiver means is operative according to the Bluetooth protocol or other short-range radio-wave based protocol.

37. (New) The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the cellular interface means is via the Bluetooth protocol or other radiofrequency-based coupling protocol, or uses an infrared-based coupling technology.

38. (New) A module, comprising:

a buddy list data store, for holding a list of identifiers, with the list organized as records so as to be able to retrieve a record based on the identifier; and

a processor configured to respond to information including an identifier indicating another communication device, for providing to an annunciator a control signal actuating the annunciator if and only if the identifier is included in the buddy list data store.